

2.8.2011



Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
Winter Welcome Center Hours 8 am-4:30 pm (Mon-Fri)

30239 South State Route 53

Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-637

<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp>

Midewin Meadowlark Messenger Feb 2010

Here's what the bird is bringin'

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Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie turned 15 years old on February 10, 2011.

Thank you to everyone involved with Midewin's mission.

We are in good hands with our incredible volunteer staff!

Hope to see you soon at some the following activities.

☆ Calendar of Volunteer Workdays/ Events for Feb-April

DATE	TIME	MEETING LOCATION	ACTIVITY
17 February 2011 Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series : Bison in the Tallgrass Prairie, presented by Chris Widga, Assistant Curator of Geology, Illinois State Museum. Learn about bison history, paleoecology, and conservation.
3 March 2011 Thursday	6:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Frog Monitoring Workshop: Encouraged for new and returning volunteers. Job description below.
3 March 2011 Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Hotshot Building	Lecture Series : Amphibians and Reptiles of Illinois, presented by Chris Phillips, Illinois Natural History Survey.
10 March 2011 Thursday	9:00am – 3:00pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Plant Control in morning, transplanting seedlings in the afternoon.

17 March 2011 Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series: Endangered plants: Is this the best we can do? <i>Presented by Tim Bell, Professor of Botany at Chicago State University.</i>
30 March 2011 Wednesday	10:00am-2:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Mighty Acorns Training Workshop: Encouraged for new and returning volunteers interested in leading youth nature activities.
31 March 2011 Thursday	9:00am – 3:00pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Plant Control in morning, transplanting seedlings in the afternoon.
2 April 2011 Saturday	9:00am – 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Moving dormant prairie plants back to the shade houses.
7 April 2011 Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series: Predators of Chicagoland <i>Presented by Chris Anchor, Wildlife Biologist with the Cook County Forest Preserve District.</i>
21 April 2011 Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series: Spiders of the Prairie. <i>Presented by Wendy Tresouthick, Environmental Education Specialist at Midewin.</i>
23 April 2011 Saturday	9:00am – 2:30pm	Location TBA	Earth Day - Garlic Mustard Control in native woodlands.
28 April 2011 Thursday	8:00am -12:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Plant Control – Garlic Mustard control in native woodlands

For more information about the events listed or to RSVP contact Allison (Hedden) Cisneros, Volunteer Coordinator at 815-423-2149 or amcisneros@fs.fed.us.

Knowing how many volunteers will attend a workday allows Midewin staff to better organize the workday, and we can inform you of any changes. Workdays may be cancelled if extreme weather occurs (again, please call ahead). If you plan on staying for the entire workday, please bring your lunch. As always, Midewin will provide tools, safety gear, and water for volunteers. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperones (for educational groups). Volunteer groups are welcome to join our workdays; many hands make for light work. Please do not bring dogs or other pets to workdays.



Directions:
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie:
Supervisors Office (SO)

☆ Help Needed on Midewin's Stream Team

Several volunteers on Midewin's RiverWatch staff have expanded their efforts and skill sets to do more comprehensive stream monitoring. They not only collect and identify stream insects to determine water quality, but are also collecting physical and chemical measurements of stream flow every two weeks from March to November. Stream monitors use sophisticated instruments and indicator strips to measure phosphate levels, turbidity, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, nitrates, and velocity. Currently there are five monitoring locations, four on Prairie Creek and one on Grant Creek. Over time, this data will be used to construct relationships between the stream flow and water chemistry.

Additional help is needed on this stream team in order to add on some additional monitoring sites.

Qualifications: Previous experience is not necessary. The best training will come from working with Midewin's hydrologist, Jeff Tepp and experienced monitors. Monitors should be interested in learning about stream ecosystems and water quality indicators. Stream monitors must be comfortable navigating through water on stream beds and banks. Monitors must be able to do field work, which includes carrying equipment and hiking distances up to a mile to access various monitoring sites, wading in ankle to knee-deep stream water, and standing for an extended period of time. Midewin will provide hip waders and water boots, but monitors typically prefer their own.

Time Commitment: Monitors gain more experience every year and therefore data gets more thorough and accurate, so a multiple year commitment is preferred. This type of long term monitoring is desired every two weeks, so stream teams typically alternate in order to monitor once a month each (March-November). Monitoring days alternate for a weekday and a Saturday option. Stream teams seem to spend in between 3-5 hours each monitoring day.



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☆ Frog Monitoring at Midewin, Don't Forget Your Flashlight

If you are interested in monitoring frogs and toads at Midewin you should attend the workshop on **Thursday, March 3 at 6pm** at Midewin's Hotshot Building. We have also scheduled an Amphibian and Reptile presentation at 7pm. Please RSVP soon, so we can get materials gathered.

The data collected by monitors is used to evaluate management needs and effectiveness, resulting in better ecological management practices. Anuran monitors help directly with part one of our mission to conserve, restore, and enhance the native populations and habitats of fish, wildlife, and plants.

Qualifications: Monitors must have a good sense of hearing in order to learn and recognize 8 mating calls. Frogs and toads are most active at night, so monitors should be available between sundown and 10pm. Most sites require walking over uneven terrain with low visibility. This type of work is often easier and safer with a partner, so this should be highly considered. New monitors may choose to partner with a more experienced monitor until they are comfortable taking on a site of their own. However this program was designed to accommodate a 'learn as you go' approach, so amateurs are certainly welcome.

Time Commitment: Monitors gain more experience every year and therefore data gets more thorough and accurate, so a multiple year commitment is preferred but not required. Surveys take place between sundown and 10pm. Monitors are asked to survey their assigned site, at minimum, 3-5 times over the mating season (mid March-late July). Monitors typically spend 1-2 hours each visit depending on the location of their site.

A good website resource is at Chicago Wilderness Habitat Project: <http://www.habitatproject.org/frogsurvey/chicagoland.html>

☆ Join the Plants of Concern (POC) Team



Team POC is making a difference for endangered and threatened native plants all over NE Illinois, SE Wisconsin, NW Indiana by monitoring their populations that helps land managers adapt their management techniques. Plants of Concern is coordinated through the Chicago Botanic Garden by Susanne Masi.

Read this article and decide for yourself if this opportunity fits your conservation interests.

[Making a Difference for Rare Plants: Click here for full article and photos](#)

Pick a workshop and you will receive training in POC monitoring techniques, meet land managers, talk with seasoned monitors and refresh your skills for the new season.

This workshop is required for all new POC monitors and we ask any returning monitors who have never been to a workshop to attend.

Morning refreshments will be served, but bring a lunch. Registration is required.

Please visit <http://www.plantsofconcern.org/> to register, or contact Greg Hitzroth at 847-835-6856 or ghitzroth@chicagobotanic.org.

Please choose from the following workshops (9:30am to 3pm)

- ◆ Sun, April 3, Danada House at Danada Forest Preserve, Wheaton, DuPage County
- ◆ Sat, April 9, Plum Creek Nature Center at Goodenow Grove Forest Preserve, Beecher, IL, Will County
- ◆ Sat April 16, Barker House at Barker Woods, Michigan City, IN
- ◆ Sat, April 30, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, Cook County

☆ Place your order for the Native Plant Sale by March 31. The sooner the better!

http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp/Alliance/2011_NativePlantSale_Information.pdf



*Sketch by Eric Ulaszek,
Midewin Horticulturist*

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